

hideous dream told him that this child lay dying in his stead.

"Can nothing save her?" he cried aloud, as if you could find one moment sooner!

She heard, and looked up at him with a look so full of love, hope, loss, imperishable love she had retained and concealed so long spoke with an intensity which he never forgot.

"She is content," she whispered softly. "I will not understand her rightly, that was my fault."

"All! How I have wronged you!"

The full strength and nobility and devotion of her nature, the delicate delicacy of her form, neglected rushed on him as he met her eyes; for the first time he saw her as she was, and his heart found its home in which the splendid heroism of this untrained nature would have been capable under a different name and struck him suddenly, heavily, as with a blow; it filled him with a passion of respect.

"O darling, my darling! what have I done to be worthy of such love!" he murmured, while tears came from his eyes, and his head dropped until it touched his lips met hers. At the first utterance of that word, the tenderness of his kisses—his caresses—the tenderness of his kisses—he had the anguish of a farewell in them, the consciousness of death in their blighted face; she trembled in his arms, and a great shivering shrank through her.

"Remember me," she learned what his sweetness might have been only when

her lips grew numb and her eyes sightless, and her heart without pulse and blood.

"Hush!" she answered with a look that pierced his soul. "Keep those kisses for himself who will take them; let me live you; she is of your aristocrats; she is not unsexed. As for me—I am only a little trooper, who has no right to kiss aristocrats." Tears came round me one instant; I shall not long bid words."

Her eyes closed as she spoke; a deadly faintness and coldness passed over her and she gasped for breath. A moment later the result of her exertions appeared. Her hands opened and rested on the war-worn faces of her "children"—rested in a long, last look of unspeakable wistfulness and longing.

"I cannot speak as I would," she said at length, while her voice grew very faint. "But I have loved you. All is over."

"If I could only see France once more!" France?

He turned that word upon her utterance; her eyes met Cecil's in one fleeting upward glance of unutterable tenderness, and then her hands still stretched out westward to where her country was, and with the dauntless heroism of her smile like the smile of a conqueror, she said that sinks to sleep, and in the midst of her army of Africa the Little One lay dead.

(THE END.)